

Unofficial Draft Copy

As of: October 17, 2008 (4:04pm)

LC0343

**** Bill No. ****

Introduced By *****

By Request of the *****

A Bill for an Act entitled: "An Act describing responsibilities of health care providers toward patients; requiring disclosure by referring health care providers of investment interests or employment relationships; providing exceptions; and clarifying the primary responsibility of health care providers."

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Montana:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Patient information -- disclosure -- referrals.** (1) It is public policy for the state of Montana that a patient receive from health care providers information that allows the patient or client to make informed decisions not only relating to their medical conditions but also to the financial or quality aspects of their health care decisions.

(2) (a) Except as provided in subsection (3), a health care provider who makes referrals and who has an investment, employment, or contractual interest related to that referral shall disclose the investment, employment, or contractual interest in writing of 100 words or less to an existing or prospective patient or client.

(b) The disclosure required in subsection (2) (a):

(i) must be in at least 10 point type and on a separate piece of paper from the general paperwork received by a patient

or a client at the initiation of a visit;

(ii) must be posted in a conspicuous place in the office or facility;

(iii) must be provided at the initiation of a visit or, preferably, at the time of the referral; and

(iv) may request a patient's or a client's signature.

(c) This subsection (2) does not prohibit a health care provider from recommending a preferred health care provider when making a referral.

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply to a patient receiving emergency care or to a patient admitted as an inpatient of a hospital, a critical access hospital, or an outpatient center for surgical services, except that prior to the discharge of an inpatient who needs home health care or skilled nursing that patient must be given appropriate referral information, as required under 42 CFR 482.43.

(4) The disclosure required in subsection (2) may be similar to the following statement:

During the course of your relationship with this health care provider, you may be referred to another health care provider or health care facility with which your referring health care provider has an investment, employment, or contractual interest. Your referring health care provider has an (investment, employment, contractual) relationship with ____ (facility or health care provider) and an (investment, employment, contractual) relationship with ____ (facility or health care provider).

You, as a patient or client, have freedom to choose among

health care providers and health care facilities.

(5) For the purposes of [section 2] and this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Diagnostic services" mean magnetic resonance imaging, nuclear medicine, angiography, arteriography, computed tomography, positron emission tomography, digital vascular imaging, bronchography, lymphangiography, splenography, ultrasound, electroencephalography, electrocardiography, nerve conduction studies, and evoked potentials.

(b) "Health care provider" is a person licensed under chapters 3 and 4, 6 through 17, 20 through 28, and 34 through 36 of this title, or a provider of diagnostic services who receives a medicare or medicaid payment under Titles XVIII or XIX of the Social Security Act, respectively.

(c) "Referral" is a written or oral order from a health care provider to a patient or a client for health care services outside of a routine office exam, including:

(i) the forwarding of a patient or a client to another health care provider with the same or a different license, to a diagnostic facility that receives medicare or medicaid payments under Titles XVIII or XIX of the Social Security Act, respectively, or to a health care facility licensed under Title 50 or operated by a health care provider licensed under this title; or

(ii) a request or establishment of a plan of care that includes the provision of prescribed health services or prescribed health care supplies.

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Primary responsibility.** In addition to any specific policy referenced in chapters 3 and 4, 6 through 17, 20 through 28, and 34 through 36 of this title, it is the public policy adopted by the legislature that a health care provider's primary responsibility is the welfare of a patient or a client in all situations except those in which the primary responsibility is to public health.

NEW SECTION. **Section 3. {standard} Codification instruction.** [Sections 1 and 2] are intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 37, chapter 2, and the provisions of Title 37, chapter 2, apply to [sections 1 and 2].

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